

was referenced in the previous amendment.

Claims 1-20 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 6-9, 12, and 15-20 have been amended hereby. It is respectfully submitted that no new issues are raised by the present amendment since any material added to the independent claims was already present in the dependent claims. The dependent claims have been amended only to the extent necessary to correspond with the amended language in the independent claims.

Independent claim 1 now calls for the closure panel to be "reversibly hingedly connected" to the housing and for "said computer housing means and said closure panel means incorporating electrical connecting means such that said display means and said membrane switch array are electrically connected to said computer means in both said first and said second positions". These added limitations were already at issue in dependent claims 6-9, but have been added to independent claim 1 to more clearly distinguish over the prior art of record and/or to place the application in better condition for appeal.

Similarly, claim 12 has been amended to call for a "reversible" hinge and connector means arranged "such that said display means and said membrane switch array are electrically connected to said computer means in both said first and said second positions". These limitations were already at issue in

dependent claims 13-19, but, again, have been added to independent claim 1 to more clearly distinguish over the prior art of record and/or to place the application in better condition for appeal.

Independent claim 20 has been amended to add "while still leaving said display means and said array interfaced to said computer means", again to more clearly distinguish over the prior art of record and/or to place the application in better condition for appeal.

Claims 1-20 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as obvious from Paulsen et al. 4,571,456 in view of Smith 4,928,094.

Again, Paulsen et al. discloses a laptop type computer which is substantially conventional, except for its housing constructed of magnesium, including a base housing and a display housing which are pivotally connected. Smith discloses a display panel which is touch operated by the use of corresponding arrays of LED's 18 and phototransistors 20. Smith's display panel does not include an overlayed membrane switch array as applicant claims and would be functionally inferior for applicant's purposes; however, Smith's panel appears to be functionally similar to applicant's overlayed membrane switch array.

The examiner relies on a general discussion of touch screen devices in column 2 of Smith to provide a teaching of a transparent membrane switch array.

The Examiner still asserts that Paulsen's Fig. 22 suggests that Paulsen's hinge is so constructed that the display is removable from the base housing.

Fig 22 in Paulsen is merely a typical exploded view illustrating the construction of the device. There is absolutely no hint in either the drawing, or the accompanying description at column 15, that the display assembly 55 is designed to be separated from the housing. To the contrary, the use of a one way torsion spring 391, a trunion 381 open on only one side, an asymmetrical base portion of the display assembly 55 with an off center bore for stop pin 343, and a one-way cable guide in the hinge ear 379 all teach away from an ability to remove, reverse and pivotally and electrically reconnect the display housing 55 to the base 53. Note, at column 15, lines 34+, the recited functions for the hinge assembly 61 provide no mention of reversibility.

Thus, applicant again urges that Paulsen in combination with Smith does not suggest the reversed closure panel arrangement called for in Claims 1, and 12, nor the pivoted access called for in claim 20, does not suggest the advantages of or the problems caused by such reversal of the closure panel, and does not suggest solutions to the problems. Thus, applicant believes that Claims 1, 12, and 20, particularly as amended herein, clearly and patentably distinguish over the combination of Paulsen et al. and Smith. Applicant, therefore, urges that Claims 1, 12, and 20

should be allowable over any combination of Paulsen et al., Smith, and the other cited references.

Claims 2-11 inclusive depend from Claim 1, and Claims 13-19 inclusive depend from Claim 12. Each dependent claim adds further details to its parent claim and is believed to distinguish over the cited references for the same reasons as Claim 1 or Claim 12 respectively.

Claims 1-20 inclusive are presented for reconsideration. Applicant contends that said claims call for notebook computers with reversible covers for external use of membrane switch screens which are not disclosed by or obvious from any of the references of record, either singly or in combination. Thus, the allowance of Claims 1-20 inclusive is earnestly solicited. In the event that the examiner does not allow the claims, Applicant respectfully asks that this amendment be entered as placing the application in better form for appeal.

Applicant wishes to express his gratitude for the courtesies extended to applicant's representative during a telephone conversation on March 17, 1993. During that conversation, this amendment was submitted by facsimile transmission in draft form. The amendments to the independent claims 1 and 12 have been changed so that the "reversible electrical connector means" previously proposed now reads simply as "electrical connecting means". Other than corresponding changes to the dependent

claims, this amendment is the same as that previously faxed in all other particulars.


During the telephone conversation, Examiner Harrell indicated that the proposed amendment would distinguish over the prior art of record, but that it might raise new issues which would require further consideration, and therefore, it might not be entered after final. The applicant is still of the opinion that this amendment raises no issues which were not previously present by way of more detailed recitations in the dependent claims. Accordingly, the amendment, along with the accompanying arguments, should be entered and should render the case allowable.

The Examiner is invited to contact applicant's attorney at the below listed telephone number in the event it is felt the prosecution of this application can be expedited thereby.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan K. Lund

By LITMAN, McMAHON & BROWN

By 

Mark E. Brown

Reg. No. 30,361

Attorney

MEB/GLB

1200 Main, Suite 1600

Kansas City, Missouri 64105

Phone: (816) 842-1590

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Hon. Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231 on March 17, 1993.

Alan K. Lund
(Applicant)

By 

March 17, 1993

(Date of Signature)